

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS HELD
FRIDAY, APRIL 25, 1919.

The sixth meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts during the fiscal year 1919 was held in its office at 1729 New York Avenue, N.W., Washington, D. C., on Friday, April 25, 1919.

The following members were present:

Mr. Moore, the Chairman,

Mr. Adams,

Mr. Kendall,

Mr. Greenleaf,

also Colonel C. S. Ridley, Secretary and
Executive Officer.

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m., and proceeded at once to the business before it.

1. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETINGS: The minutes of the preceding meeting held in Washington on March 21, 1919, and of a committee meeting held in New York City on April 3, 1919, were presented by the Secretary and approved.

2. PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD BRIDGE: The Commission at several preceding meetings had conferences with Colonel Tyler, in charge of the local United States Engineer Office, and engineers of the Pennsylvania Railroad, regarding the design for a new bridge to be erected by the Pennsylvania Railroad across the Anacostia in place of the present structure now spanning that river. Exhibits A and B attached show results of study of the situation by both the United States Engineer Office and the Pennsylvania Railroad in the designing of this bridge, and whether it could be bascule, swing or lift. Outline

sketches for each of such types of bridge were before the Commission. Colonel Tyler and Mr. Harrison of his office appeared at 10:30 and covered the different phases of the situation involved. The bascule type was considered out of the question. A comparison of the lift bridge design with that of the swing design submitted and of both of these in elevation with the future elevation of the Massachusetts Avenue bridge convinced the Commission that the lift bridge would be better in this location than the long line and the piers of the swing bridge. In centering their attention on the lift bridge design the Commission pointed out certain desirable changes which Colonel Tyler said he would make. Among these were taking out the buttresses of the tower, raising the soffit of the arch on the inner surface from 5 feet to 6 feet, and widening of the pier.

3. DESIGNS FOR BENNING AND ALLEN BRIDGES ACROSS THE ANACOSTIA:

Colonel Tyler, Engineer Officer in charge of the local United States Engineer Office, submitted a pencil sketch elevation of a proposed bridge on the Benning Road over the navigation channel of the Anacostia River on which he asked the Commission's criticism and advice. The sketch was approved subject to certain modifications which were discussed with Colonel Tyler and indicated on the sketch elevation.

He also submitted a sketch elevation of the proposed Allen Bridge on the Benning Road over Lake Kingman adjoining the navigation channel of the Anacostia River, which was a modification and simplification of a previous design submitted to the Commission, and meeting the criticisms of that design. Subject to a few desirable improvements pointed out to Colonel Tyler the design was approved.

4. COMMERCIAL WATERFRONT ALONG THE ANACOSTIA: Exhibit C gives a

letter from Colonel Tyler of the local United States Engineer Office with reference to the use of the waterfront between the Pennsylvania Railroad and the Anacostia bridges for commercial purposes. The Commission had given considerable study to this matter since receipt of the letter, and, after further discussion with Colonel Tyler at this meeting, they saw no objection to the utilization of that space for commercial waterfront purposes. During the discussion it was felt that eventually the Washington Channel navigation would be transferred to the Anacostia River and the Channel reserved primarily for the use of pleasure craft; and that the area between the Navy Yard and the War College would have to be devoted to the accommodation of commercial navigation facilities.

5. FULL-SIZED DESIGN FOR COPING FOR LINCOLN MEMORIAL BASIN: Plan showing the full-sized design for the coping around the Lincoln Memorial Basin (1X1-A, April 25, 1919) submitted by Colonel Ridley was approved.

6. PLANTING AROUND ARLINGTON MEMORIAL AMPHITHEATER: A short time ago the Commission passed on a planting plan for the territory immediately surrounding the Arlington Memorial Amphitheater prepared by Carrere and Hastings, architects of New York City. Criticisms were communicated to the architects and these they endeavored to incorporate in a revised planting study. This second study was laid before the Commission by Colonel Ridley for criticism and advice. The following suggestions were made:-

Those cedars marked with red pencil for planting for immediate effect appear satisfactorily selected for foundation planting. It would be well to group with them several cedars of varying smaller sizes and round growing forms like *Pinus Montana* and perhaps *Siberian Arborvitae*.

The Commission suggest that the grove on the south side of the structure be planted so as not entirely to cut off the view diagonally down the river. It is also suggested that the west edge of the grove be loosened up a bit to avoid the stiff outline - one or two trees could be planted out into the vista. In this grove it might

be considered well to mingle elms with oaks, for instance.

The suggestion was emphasized that care should be taken that the grove on the north side of the structure hitches on to the woods effect well.

Along the axis line H-H, the Commission liked the idea of grouping cedars down the paths, which has been eliminated in this second planting plan. It was suggested that the elm trees be removed or loosened up and the cedars restored.

It was pointed out as desirable that in groups E hemlocks be restored with the rhododendrons, and have only a few Douglas spruce for spiral effect to right and left.

At place marked A** cedars can be eliminated, for, after the lindens and elms have grown, the space will be sufficiently filled out. At A* 2 or 3 elms should be introduced.

East of the colonnade on both north and south sides elms are suggested where indicated with yellow cross inside blue circle, close to building.

7. MERIDIAN HILL PARK: Colonel Ridley brought before the Commission for discussion certain plans already considered by the Commission regarding Meridian Hill Park. Captain H. W. Peaslee, architectural designer engaged on the Park, was present. The main points discussed with the action suggested by the Commission are the following:

(a) Tree planting along walk above Sixteenth Street. Alley of trees as originally designed, preferred. Exact spacing to be adjusted.

(b) Tree planting on Terrace. Elms as proposed by Mr. Vitale preferred.

(c) Modifications of cornices, great terrace: West end motif to be modified same as east. Detailed sketch noted on plan.

(d) Euclid Street pavilions: Projection outside of wall to be reduced.

(e) North entrance: Park not to be locked up; gate slides may be sealed.

(f) Hedge niches along Mall: Arched top as well as recess desired if obtainable.

(g) Confirmation of previous changes:

(a) Hedge ends in front of Euclid street pavilion to be returned slightly.

(b) Planting on upper level of north entrance to be redesigned.

(c) Entrance near shelter to be eliminated and planting modified.

(h) Cross axis on side hill: To be changed so that west terminal is directly back of lower motif on Sixteenth Street.

(i) Corner Fifteenth and W Streets: To have gazebo like Sixteenth Street corner.

(j) Use of pebble mosaic: Introduction desirable in lower garden ($\frac{3}{4}$ maximum). Should be collaboration between designers of park and memorial.

(k) Pool coping: Seat-coping proposed. Discussion pro and con. To be reconsidered in connection with cascade.

Several small scale models showing alternative treatment of the water treatment of the Park were also discussed but action deferred.

8. RUSTIC TABLE AND SEATS FOR PARKS: Colonel Ridley submitted designs for a rustic park table, rustic long table and seat, and hexagonal table and seat (marked respectively, 1-C, 1-B and 1-A) for the opinion of the Commission. It was suggested that a small space be left between the boards on the top of the table to let the water run through after rains and that the cleats underneath be narrowed and deepened to minimize the danger of rot; also as 4 inch posts would look rather spidery, 6 inch posts should be substituted.

9. ARMY DISCHARGE CERTIFICATE BY E. H. BLASHFIELD: Mr. Adams exhibited a reproduction of a design for a new meritorious discharge certificate to be issued by the Army which had been prepared by Edwin Howland Blashfield,

New York City, for the War Department. The Commission approved this design subject to a few desirable minor modifications which are to be communicated to him by Mr. Adams.

10. SITE FOR FRANCIS ASBURY MEMORIAL: In the legislation providing for the erection of the Francis Asbury Memorial in the city of Washington Congress directed that the "design of the memorial shall be approved and the site shall be chosen by the Commission of Fine Arts". At the preceding meeting in Washington the Commission had, after inspection on the ground, given the Francis Asbury Memorial Association the choice of three sites, numbered respectively, Reservations 309-A, 309-B, and 309-G. In a letter from the Francis Asbury Memorial Association they asked for the selection of Reservation 309-B, and this was selected by the Commission as the final site.

11. FULL-SIZE PLASTER MODEL FOR GRANT EQUESTRIAN STATUE: Colonel Ridley advised that the full-size plaster model for the equestrian statue of General Grant was ready for the inspection of the Commission at the sculptor's studio. Mr. Adams, as the committee of the Commission on the Grant Memorial, was asked to make this inspection at the earliest possible moment. Arrangements were made for the inspection on Tuesday afternoon, April 29th, by Mr. Adams, accompanied by Mr. Moore and Colonel Ridley. (Approved).

12. ARLINGTON FARMS PROJECT: Mr. Betts of the Office of Public Roads of the Department of Agriculture, appeared on behalf of that Department in connection with a plan showing the layout of the proposed Arlington Farms project and the elevation of a building which will be one of the group of buildings to be erected as shown on the plan. The Commission were pleased with the plan but deferred their report until Mr. Platt and Mr. Pope, who were present at the time the design for the building was under discussion

last, could see the latter again.

13. WORKING MODEL FOR "NUNS OF THE BATTLEFIELD" MONUMENT: During the afternoon Mr. Adams, accompanied by Mr. Kendall and Mr. Moore as members of a committee went to the studio of Jerome Connor, 322 North Carolina Avenue, S.E., for an inspection of the working model for the proposed memorial monument to be erected at the intersection of Connecticut and Rhode Island Avenues to the "Nuns of the Battlefield". Mr. Adams' report is attached hereto as Exhibit D.

14. VICTORY MEDAL: The Chairman brought before the Commission a letter dated March 28th from the General Staff of the Army (attached hereto as Exhibit E) advising them that the different allied and associated governments sitting in Paris to select an Interallied War Medal for the combatants of the present war, had agreed to certain recommendations as to design, composition, &c, - all enumerated in above letter - and asking the Commission of Fine Arts to undertake the execution of the design. Mr. Moore stated that he had, after consultation with Mr. Adams, asked the War Department to place at the disposal of the Fine Arts Commission the sum of \$ 3,000 for compensation of the sculptor, including the production of the master die and that the Department had agreed to do so. The Commission selected Mr. James E. Fraser of New York as the designer.

15. GROUND PLAN FOR PROPERTY OF CAPITAL CEMETERY COMPANY: Mr. J. H. Small, Jr., landscape architect for the Capital Cemetery Company in the development of properties of that corporation lying northeast of the National Training School at the District and extending from the Bladensburg Pike to the Eastern Branch limits of the projected Anacostia Park scheme, unofficially consulted the members of the Commission regarding details of

the plan for that area he was working on. Mr. Small offered his cooperation in so endeavoring to lay out his plan that it would harmonize perfectly with whatever plans, particularly for roadways, might be made in the development of adjoining Government lands. The Commission discussed these details with Mr. Small, giving their comments to him orally and unofficially.

16. ARMY AVIATION PROJECT ON ANACOSTIA RIVER: Lieutenants Knight and Foster, representing the Aviation Section of the Army, appeared before the Commission during the afternoon with regard to plans showing the tentative layout for a large permanent Army aviation field proposed near the present Bolling Field on the south side of the Anacostia River. These plans were in preliminary sketch form only, (file number 126) since appropriations still have to be secured from Congress and were merely presented to serve as a basis for discussion in securing the Commission's comment. The Commission were greatly interested in the plan and believed that it could be developed as a very interesting feature in conjunction with Washington parks. In discussing the type of architecture, the Army representatives were informed that buildings of materials like those used in the Army War College would be satisfactory, and that their structures should all harmonize with those of the War College buildings.

17. INCREASE IN SALARY ATTACHED TO POSITION OF ASSISTANT TO THE SECRETARY: In view of the various additional duties that have been imposed upon the position of Assistant to the Secretary in the present fiscal year which are dissimilar from those required in previous years, the Commission authorized and directed the compensation for that position to be \$3,000 per annum, from April 7, 1919, and the promotion and appointment of Mr. Arno B. Cammerer from Assistant to the Secretary at \$2,500 per annum to Assistant to the Secretary at \$3,000 per annum, this promotion to take effect April 7, 1919.

18. MISCELLANEOUS: Action on a plan for roads in front of the Freer Art Gallery on the Mall, plan showing the road system of West Potomac Park along the river front with relation to the Lincoln Memorial, consideration of another location in Judiciary Park for the Lincoln statue now in front of the Court House, and on 580 small-sized and 35 large-sized photographs submitted by the War Department for selection of from 15 to 30 of them on the basis of historical importance, technical perfection, and artistic merit, was deferred until the next meeting.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, the Commission adjourned at 6 p.m., subject to the call of the Chairman.

WAR DEPARTMENT
UNITED STATES ENGINEER OFFICE
Washington, D.C.

April 18, 1919.

Colonel C. S. Ridley,
Executive Officer,
The Commission of Fine Arts,
Lemon Building,
Washington, D. C.

Colonel:-

1. I forward herewith for the consideration of the Fine Arts Commission, the following listed papers relating to the proposed Pennsylvania, Baltimore and Washington Railroad Bridge now before that body:

- (a) Letter from Mr. Farnham, Assistant Engineer of Bridges and Buildings, Pennsylvania Railroad, and the plans mentioned therein.
- (b) Comparative elevations of the proposed swing and proposed lift bridge.
- (c) Plan showing relative location of the proposed bridge with respect to proposed Massachusetts Avenue Bridge.

2. These studies bring out clearly certain points, viz:

- (a) The bascule draw is practically as high at its highest point as the towers of the lift bridge, is unsymmetrical and generally unsightly.
- (b) The swing bridge is of such height as to eliminate entirely any possibility of its appearing inconspicuous, or in keeping with the pier and girder spans on either side of it.
- (c) Attention is especially invited to the pile fender system which will be necessary with this type of bridge (shown on park plan herewith) which cannot be other than an unsightly object in the river when seen either from shore or from the Massachusetts Avenue Bridge.

3. After a careful consideration of the data, it seems to me that the lift span bridge is by far the best in appearance. From a navigation standpoint, it is much more satisfactory than the swing bridge. I am also of opinion that the flat slab crossings of the parkways are better in appearance and structurally more suited to existing foundation conditions than the arches under consideration as a substitute.

4. Action at the meeting of the Commission scheduled for April 25, is urgently requested.

Very respectfully,

M. C. TYLER,
Colonel, Engineers, U.S.A.

6 Incls.

EXHIBIT A

PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD, EASTERN LINES
Philadelphia.

April 12, 1919.

Colonel M. C. Tyler,
Corps of Engineers, U.S.A.,
305 Southern Building,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:-

Re: Proposed bridge over Anacostia River,
Washington, D. C.

We are enclosing herewith two blueprints each of our plans 12492-G and 12492-H, showing a vertical lift span and a swing span respectively for the movable bridge at the above mentioned location.

We have examined into this matter very carefully and have come to the conclusion that the two types of bridges, shown on the plans mentioned, are the only practicable ones considering the surrounding conditions.

We are also enclosing a sketch showing a bascule span, which we believe would not be considered from an aesthetic point of view.

You will understand, of course, that the towers for the vertical lift span, shown on plan 12492-G, can be built either as shown, or with the steelwork exposed; the latter being our choice. Also please note that the elevation shown on plan 12492-G are from P.R.R. datum, with mean low water elevation at - 1.5, while those shown on plan 12492-H are from U.S. Engineers datum, with mean low water at elevation 0.

The vertical lift span is the cheaper one, both from a first cost and operating standpoint, and we would, therefore, naturally prefer that type, although we would raise no serious objection to the swing span. It will, of course, be necessary to have a fender for the swing span.

You will also note that the approach spans over the Park drives are shown as flat slabs on plan 12492-G, and as arches on plan 12492-H. We are enclosing a small sketch showing in more detail these driveway spans. This office would prefer the flat slabs for the reason that, with this design, all loads would be vertical, and this may develop into a material consideration on account of the poor foundation which may be expected at this point. We also feel that from an aesthetic point of view the flat slab is preferable, on account of all lines being horizontal and therefore being more consistent with the river spans.

As far as this office is concerned, we would be willing to submit to our executive officers any of the above plans, that is, either a swing or lift span for the movable span, and either flat slabs or arches over the drive-ways.

We will therefore appreciate if you will present this matter to the Fine Arts Commission and advise us of their preference as well as your own, and upon receipt of advice from you, we will be very glad to take this matter up and ascertain just what position the railroad is going to take.

Yours truly,

Encls.

R. Farnham,
Asst. Engineer of Bridges and Buildings.

WAR DEPARTMENT
UNITED STATES ENGINEER OFFICE
Washington, D.C.

March 24, 1919.

From: The District Engineer, Washington, D. C.
To: The Executive Officer, Commission of Fine Arts,
Lemon, Building, Washington, D. C.

Subject: Anacostia Development on City side, between Anacostia Bridge
and Philadelphia, Baltimore & Washington, R.R. Bridge.

1. By the terms of an Act of Congress approved June 24, 1910, the Secretary of the Navy is authorized and directed to enter into a contract with the Philadelphia, Baltimore & Washington Railroad Company for the construction, maintenance and operation of a track connection to be used and operated from a point on the main running tracks of said Railroad Company, at or in the general vicinity of Square 1080 in the District of Columbia and extending generally along the water front of the Anacostia River to a connection with the track system of the United States Navy Yard, at or in the vicinity of the East line of Ninth street, Southeast, in the District of Columbia, such track connection to be constructed wholly upon a suitable and satisfactory right of way provided for such purposes by the United States, the title of which shall at all times remain in the said United States.

2. Since the enactment of this legislation, the Navy Department has acquired additional land for Navy Yard purposes and the Navy Yard now extends to 11th Street, Southeast.

3. The land along the water front between Square 1080 and the Anacostia Bridge is still in litigation but it is anticipated that clear title will be acquired by the United States in the near future, and as the seawall along this front (with the exception of one small gap) has been built and the fill behind the wall practically completed, it may be expected that the Navy Department will desire to construct the authorized trackage as soon as such title is secured.

4. The commercial water front between Anacostia Bridge and the Philadelphia, Baltimore & Washington Railroad bridge has greater possibilities for the development of a satisfactory water rail terminal than any frontage available. It now has 18 feet of water, which can be deepened to 24 feet, the ruling depth of the Potomac, and in addition, has rail connection with every railroad entering Washington. It is conveniently located with respect to the heart of the city. It is therefore of the greatest importance that any trackage connecting the Philadelphia, Baltimore & Washington Railroad with the Navy Yard should be so located as to fit into a general scheme for water-front and wharf trackage and in such a way as to be an integral part of the general plan.

5. I attach hereto a print showing the lands acquired or to be acquired between Anacostia Bridge and the District line. The Commercial front between Anacostia Bridge and the Philadelphia, Baltimore, & Washington Railroad Bridge

is shown in brown.

6. In order that all questions affecting the development of this front may be known to this office, and especially to the end that the question of the location of the Navy Department's trackage may be intelligently considered should it come up in the near future, I request that you inform me as to whether the Commission of Fine Arts has any recommendation to make with respect to the development of this commercial water front.

M. C. Tyler,
Colonel, Engineers, U.S.A.

1 Inclosure.

XEROX



C O P Y

May 10, 1919.

Dear Sir:-

The Commission of Fine Arts, after an examination of your model for the monument to be known as "The Nuns of the Battlefield", and consulting with you as to the work, are of the opinion that the central and determining feature - the figures of the ten Nuns - are of such importance as to require all the time and study of the sculptor. The members are pleased that you yourself look at the matter in the same light, and that you are ready to consider eliminating the side figures (which present the very great difficulty of properly subordinated relations to the central composition), and concentrating your attention on the panel.

The Commission also feel that it is desirable to give at least the indications of a frame. The monument is primarily for the adornment of the City of Washington; it will come into relation with architecture and it is to stand in a space bounded by formal lines. It should therefore recognize these conditions.

In future, if possible, the Commission would be pleased to have the model presented at their offices.

I have the honor to be,

Very respectfully, yours,

(signed) C. S. Ridley,

Colonel, U. S. Army,
Secretary and Executive Officer.

Jerome Connor, Esq.,
31 C Street, S. E.,
Washington, D. C.

Exhibit
EXHIBIT D

May 10, 1917.

Dear Sir:-

The Commission of Fine Arts, after an examination of your model for the monument to be known as "The Hero of the Battle Field", and consulting with you as to the work, are of the opinion that the central and determining feature - the figure of the hero - is of such importance as to require all the time and study of the sculptor. The members are pleased that you yourself look at the model in the same light, and that you are ready to consider eliminating the side figures (which present the very real difficulty of properly subordinating relations to the central composition), and concentrating your attention on the panel.

The Commission also feel that it is desirable to give at least the indications of a frieze. The monument is primarily for the adornment of the City of Washington; it will come into relation with architecture and it is to stand in a space bounded by formal lines. It should therefore recognize these conditions.

In future, if possible, the Commission would be pleased to have the model presented at their offices.

I have the honor to be,

Very respectfully, Yours,

(signed) C. A. Bailey,

Colonel, U. S. Army,
Secretary and Executive Officer.

Lafayette Square, Wash.,
315 Street, N. E.,
Washington, D. C.

Charles D. Smith

March 28, 1919.

The Secretary,
Commission of Fine Arts,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:-

The Secretary of War directs me to inform you that representatives of the different allied and associated governments have been sitting in Paris to select an Interallied War Medal for the combatants of the present war, and the following recommendations of that commission have been agreed to by this government:

"1. A Medal of the Great War shall be created and called 'The Victory Medal'.

2. This Medal shall be distributed under conditions to be determined by each Government, but these should be such as will prevent this Medal from being confounded with any purely commemorative one which may be awarded to all mobilized persons.

3. The ribbon identical for all countries, will represent two rainbows placed in juxtaposition in such manner as will bring the red in the middle; a white thread will run along each edge. This ribbon should be distributed as soon as possible.

4. The Medal shall be of bronze and round; its diameter 36 millimeters; its color, finish (Patine) and thickness, as well as its ring for suspension, shall be similar to that of the French Medal of the Campaign of 1870.

5. It having been recognized as impossible within any acceptable lapse of time to carry out a competition among artists of the various countries and to select by this means a single artist to execute the Medal, it is agreed that instead of conferring an identical Medal, the allied and associated Governments will bestow upon their combatants Medals resembling each other as closely as possible.

To this effect ~~said~~ Governments shall have their respective Medals executed by artists of their own selection, but conforming to the following specifications:

(A) On the obverse will be represented a victory - winged, standing, full length and full face; the background

and the border will be plain; the obverse will bear no inscription or

(B) The reverse will bear the inscription "The Great War for Civilization", in the language of the country concerned, and will show the names of the various allied and associated nations, all indicating their arms.

(C) The edge will be plain. "

In conformity with the policy which is now being followed, the Secretary of War would be pleased if the Commission of Fine Arts would undertake to execute the design for this medal in accordance with the recommendations quoted above.

Yours truly,

For the Director of Operations:

Robert E. Wyllie,
Colonel, General Staff,
Chief, Equipment Branch,
Operations Division.

